

Mansfield Board of Education Meeting

April 28, 2016

Council Chambers 7:30 p.m.

Board Members: Randy Walikonis, Chair, Jay Rueckl, Vice-Chair; Martha Kelly, Secretary, Susannah Everett, John Fratiello, Sarah Lacombe, Katherine Paulhus, Carrie Silver-Bernstein, Kathy Ward

Agenda

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 10, 2016 (M) (P. 1)

HEARING FOR VISITORS

COMMUNICATIONS (P. 3)

ADDITIONS TO THE PRESENT AGENDA

BOARD REPORTS: Personnel Committee, Goals and Objectives Committee, Policy Committee

INFORMATION, PRESENTATIONS, AND ACTIONS

- Request from Willington Public Schools (M)
- Follow-up to exploration of E.O. Smith Campus (P. 4)
- Budget Update
- Geometry Text Update
- May Workshop Date

NEW BUSINESS (If needed)

CONSENT AGENDA: (P. 5)

The following item for the Board of Education April 28, 2016 meeting be approved or received for the record, unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools.

That the Mansfield Board of Education accepts the retirement of Joan Carr, Southeast School music teacher, effective June 30, 2016.

That the Mansfield Board of Education approves the request for leave by Rochelle Marcus effective January 3 – April 14, 2017.

HEARING FOR VISITORS

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Robert's Rules of Order General Guidelines

As outlined in the MBOE By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Board unless otherwise provided by the by-laws. Following are some general guidelines from Robert's Rules and the By-Laws that should be followed to ensure efficient meetings and the rights of all members, aid decision-making and allow all to be heard.

1. During any discussion, a member must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
2. A member will not be allowed to speak a second time until all other members wishing to speak have been allowed to do so.
3. Members should refrain from speaking a second time unless they have a new point to make or need to respond to new information.
4. As a general rule during discussion, comments should be directed through the Chair to the whole Board, rather than to other or individual members. All discussion is with the Board as a whole. Questions of the Superintendent or other non-BOE members making presentations should be directed to that individual.
5. Private conversations can be distracting to those speaking and should be limited.
6. During discussion, the Chair should try to provide equal time to those in favor or against a given topic or motion.
7. A majority is more than half of the votes cast, not a majority of the Board. For example: if only 7 members choose to vote, and the result is 4-3 in favor, the motion is adopted. Members who abstain are "refraining from voting".
8. If discussion on a **motion** is lasting a long time, any member can "move the previous question" or "call the question". They must be recognized by the Chair in order to do so. This is not debatable, and a two-thirds vote is required to pass. If two-thirds vote in favor of ending debate, the Board ends all discussion on a motion and then moves to an immediate vote on that motion.
9. Committee reports that recommend action should be submitted in writing. This allows for clear understanding of recommendations.

Mansfield Public Schools: Board of Education Goals

I. Engage, motivate and support each student to become confident and successful learners through differentiated instruction and holistic support. Monitor student progress to ensure growth.

- A. Improve the mathematics, reading, science and writing skills of each student to support college and career readiness.
- B. Align our current Language Arts/Reading, Science and Mathematics curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- C. Promote the cognitive, social, and emotional development of each student while cultivating character and fostering civic engagement.
- D. Support the full breadth of the district's programs, foster environmental awareness and sustainability, systematically review program offerings, and explore other programs.
- E. Provide a positive school climate through constructive behavior support systems to ensure student safety, health, physical and emotional well-being.
- F. Promote the engagement and participation of parents/guardians in the education of their children.
- G. Integrate relevant technology into the instructional program to enhance student learning of subject matter, technology and its use.
- H. Help connect students and families with community support services.
- I. Ensure student transitions are supportive and successful.
- J. Acknowledge student achievements.

II. Attract, support and retain qualified, motivated and diverse professional staff by fostering positive, professional learning communities.

- A. Foster a climate of mutual respect and regularly recognize staff leadership, effort and success.
- B. Maintain superior educational programs, adjusting staff levels and resources as required.
- C. Support administrative leadership to maintain and surpass current levels of student achievement.
- D. Implement, with input and collaboration from certified staff, an effective professional development and evaluation program that supports the growth and confidence of our students and promotes staff success.
- E. Seek input from staff regarding important issues affecting the district.

III. Monitor the district's quality of facilities, sufficiency of space, level of security, adequacy of maintenance and efficiency of student transportation.

- A. Communicate quarterly with Town Council about ongoing needs for infrastructure, security and technology.
- B. In collaboration with the Town Council, develop and implement a long-term plan, supported by voters, to address prek-8 building needs.
- C. Implement school security and technology improvements as approved by the Board.

IV. Increase the effectiveness of the Board of Education.

- A. Provide Board members with appropriate professional development opportunities to promote effectiveness.
- B. Encourage communication and collaboration between the Board and our community.
- C. Collaborate with community members and organizations – including E. O. Smith High School's Region 19 Board -- to support the district's students.
- D. Review prekindergarten educational opportunities for Mansfield children.
- E. Evaluate the Board's goal-setting process.

V. Plan for long-term fiscal sustainability.

- A. Meet periodically with our state legislators to advocate for continued Education Cost Sharing; develop a plan to address changes to current funding level.
- B. Continue to explore partnerships with other groups to maximize program effectiveness while containing costs.
- C. Investigate alternative revenue, including public and private funding sources and grant opportunities.
- D. Continue to educate ourselves and the public about long-term financial ramifications of balancing Board goals and priorities.
- E. Improve the readability of our budget.

Mansfield Board of Education

March 10, 2016

Minutes

Attendees: Randy Walikonis, Chair, Jay Rueckl, Vice Chair, Martha Kelly, Secretary, John Fratiello, Carrie Silver-Bernstein, Kathy Ward

Excused: Susannah Everett, Sarah Lacombe, Katherine Paulhus

The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm by Mr. Walikonis.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Fratiello, seconded by Mr. Rueckl, to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2016 meeting. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

HEARING FOR VISITORS: Veronica Barcelona de Mendoza regarding well-being of children at the middle school.

COMMUNICATIONS: Email received from Jason Courtmanche.

ADDITIONS TO THE PRESENT AGENDA: Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mr. Fratiello, to add retirement request after Executive Session. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Mrs. Paulhus arrived at 7:43pm.

BOARD REPORTS:

Personnel Committee: Mr. Walikonis reported the Personnel Committee will begin negotiations with UPSEU (custodians, food service, and maintainers) shortly.

INFORMATION, PRESENTATIONS, AND ACTIONS:

- April 14, 2016 Meeting: Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mr. Fratiello, to move the April 14th meeting to April 28th. Vote Unanimous in favor.
- Board Goals: Mrs. Lyman updated the Board on the status of Board Goals and next steps. She will be scheduling focus groups with teachers and parents/community members in the near future. Mr. Walikonis stated the need to form a subcommittee to continue work on the goals. Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Ms. Silver-Bernstein to request the Board Chair to appoint a subcommittee to work on Board Goals. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- March 24, 2016 Professional Development Day: Mrs. Lyman reviewed the plans for the upcoming professional development day.
- Liberty Bank Early Literacy Grant: Mrs. Lyman reported the district applied for an early literacy grant from Liberty Bank which would offer summer school for kindergarten and first grade students who have not met end of year expectations in literacy.
- Region 19 High School Plans: The Board discussed Region 19 reported plans for a new school. Board members discussed the possibility of the Town buying the high school for the district. Mrs. Lyman was asked to contact the Region 19 Superintendent to discuss.
- Connecticut State Department of Education Next Generation Accountability System: Mrs. Lyman reviewed the Accountability Report and the changes made this year. Vinton School was recognized for performance of all students. Southeast School was recognized for performance of all students and performance of high needs subgroup.

NEW BUSINESS: None

HEARING FOR VISITORS: None

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Mr. Fratiello would like a discussion on recess. Ms. Ward would like a discussion on the Wellness Policy.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus, to move to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter related to possible administrator retirement and related contractual provision at 8:50pm. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
Mrs. Lyman joined the Board at the Executive Session.

The Board returned to regular session at 9:13pm.

Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus, to approve waiver of notice of provision of retirement benefit for Dr. James Palmer. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus, to accept the retirement of Dr. James Palmer, Principal, Vinton Elementary School.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Mrs. Paulhus, seconded by Ms. Silver-Bernstein, to adjourn at 9:15pm.
Vote: Unanimous in favor.


Celeste Griffin, Board Clerk

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

40 Old Farms Road, Suite A, Willington, CT 06279 Phone: 860.487.3130 Fax: 860.487.3132

David C. Harding, Superintendent
dharding@willingtonct.org
<http://www.willingtonpublicschools.org/>

Via Email

To: The Mansfield Board of Education
From: David C. Harding, Superintendent 
Date: April 15, 2016
Re: Request: Sustainability/cooperative agreement

For the past two years the Willington Board of Education has been engaged in exploring options to deal with declining enrollments and the sustainability of our programs. One of the options had been to tuition out students. The former Mansfield superintendent had originally been approached and had responded that there was no room in Mansfield. However, now that Mansfield is conducting a facilities study and looking at ways to maintain the elementary schools it might be worth revisiting the concept.

At the April 12, 2016 Willington Board of Education meeting, the Board authorized me to contact you to see if Mansfield had any interest in opening a dialogue to discuss this option.

Although it might sound like a radical idea, in fact, it could be a very innovative way for both Willington and Mansfield to save money and at the same time maintain high quality academic programming. What I am proposing is that Mansfield considers tuitioning in all of Willington students or at least the fifth through eighth grade students. There are a myriad of issues that would need to be discussed both financially as well as politically. Therefore, let this memo serve as a formal request to begin a conversation between the Boards of Education or other legislative bodies of Willington and Mansfield to further explore this potential cooperative arrangement.

I look forward to your response and thank you for taking the time to consider my request.

Findings Regarding Suitability of E.O. Smith High School for Mansfield Public Schools

At the request of the Mansfield Board of Education, a visit was made to E. O. Smith High School to discuss the suitability of the E. O. Smith campus as a replacement for our elementary schools as Region 19 considers building a new high school. The following summarizes findings:

Update on E.O. Smith Project

UCONN has expressed an interest in purchasing the property and discussion is expected to continue in May. The sale of the property to UCONN would be expected to provide much of the needed revenue to address the costs of building a new high school. If UCONN does not purchase the property, E.O. Smith will likely stay put.

Building Condition

- The original section of the building was built in the 1950s with additions that include a recent 1999 renovation and addition to the arts wing. The result is a sprawling building of 246,000 square feet. The square footage of our 3 elementary schools combined is 111,371.
- There are approximately 67 academic classrooms plus an arts wing, a vocational-agriculture wing, and other specialty classrooms such as culinary arts labs. Our 3 elementary schools use approximately 54 academic classrooms.
- The building includes two floors of academic classrooms connected by isolated hallways and large staircases.
- The 1950s academic hallways include low, drop ceilings, almost no natural light, and institutional corridors with solid classroom doors.
- The roof surface is "massive" and sections are in need of replacement.
- There are 4 boilers that service the school. Two are newer, one is in need of replacement (possibly before Region 19 vacates the building).
- The cafeteria is U-shaped with the kitchen and serving area (food court style) in the center. This requires a minimum of two adults to supervise.
- Cooling is a significant issue in the building with second floor classrooms and art rooms exceedingly uncomfortable in spring and fall.
- Well-designed spaces for the arts and vocational-agricultural programs are extensive and may not be of use to an elementary school. The sheer distance from academic classrooms to these facilities will create a challenge for moving young children. It is anticipated that much of this space would be underutilized or not used at all but will need to be maintained, heated, etc. In partnership with the town these spaces could be repurposed as an additional community building but some spaces replicate facilities already available through the town or university.
- Exterior spaces are saturated with high school athletic fields, tennis courts, and parking. Developmentally appropriate play spaces would need to be created, likely requiring the removal of the track and turf stadium.
- Building safety needs are complicated by the vast number of exterior doors.

Summary

Extensive renovation is needed to retrofit the building for young children and to meet the more flexible learning needs that today's educational programs seek. This renovation could not occur until students are relocated to a new high school and would likely require partnership with the Town of Mansfield to allow for utilization of the full building.

Children can be housed in any facility, but it is important that the focus remains creating an environment that meets the educational needs of the learning programs and the developmental needs of the students. The feasibility and cost of this project could be more than the community is willing to assume.

April 28, 2016

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March 22, 2016

To: Mrs. Kelly Lyman
Superintendent of Schools
4 South Eagleville Road
Storrs, Connecticut 06268

From: Mrs. Joan W. Carr
4 Adam Lane
Tolland, Connecticut 06084-3517

Dear Mrs. Lyman:

Please accept this letter as notification of my retirement as Music Teacher, at Southeast Elementary School, within the Mansfield, CT School District, effective as of the end of this school year, i.e. June 30, 2016.

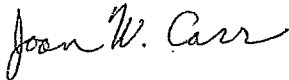
I have genuinely enjoyed my twenty years or more, that I have spent teaching music at Southeast. I have found the staff, both professional and support staff, at this school, to be exceptionally well qualified, enthusiastic, as well as an absolute pleasure to work with.

I started my music teaching career in 1967, in Wethersfield Connecticut before moving to Massachusetts where I taught music for ten years. Upon my return to Connecticut, I resumed teaching music, primarily in the Mansfield School System.

I am now ready to conclude my forty years of teaching music at both the elementary and middle school levels.

I wish to set up an appointment with Michele Beers to discuss my employment retirement plans. If Michele Beers is not the proper contact person, please advise me as to whom it is that I should contact.

Sincerely,



Joan W. Carr
Music Teacher
Southeast Elementary School
carrjw@mansfieldct.org

April 20, 2016

Superintendent Lyman and the Members of the Mansfield Board of Education
4 S. Eagleville Rd.
Storrs, CT 06268

Dear Superintendent Lyman and Members of the Mansfield Board of Education:

I am writing to request an unpaid leave of absence from January 3 through April 14, 2017. I would like to join my husband on his sabbatical leave in Nottingham, England. My plan is to teach through December and return after spring break in April.

I will take the opportunity to study in England. In addition, I hope to research and observe the public school system in England as well as continue my work with mentoring student teachers and new teachers. I plan to offer seminars in some classes at the University of Nottingham through their School of Education. This opportunity will directly enhance my contributions to our school system as a TEAM mentor, teacher leader and MEA leader, language arts and literature teacher and as an advocate for global awareness and appreciation. If my request were granted, I would spend the time in Nottingham, England.

Traveling and living in other countries always presents me with new resources and insights to incorporate into my teaching. This leave would provide me with an opportunity to immerse myself in different cultures, visit pertinent historical sites in Europe like Shakespeare's Globe Theater and other museums, and learn about foreign education systems. It will expand my knowledge, widen my understanding of diverse viewpoints and experiences, and enhance my skills as an educator, all of which will support my work in the Mansfield School System.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. Of course, I would work closely with my MMS team and the long-term substitute to ensure a smooth transition. If you have any questions or requests for further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Marcus
marcusrh@mansfieldct.org

860-429-1787 (home); 860-420-9487 (cell)

Cc: Candace Morell, Larry Barlow